

# Record

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## Committee tours Gulfshore Assembly

By William H. Perkins Jr.  
Editor

Members of the Conference Ministries Study Committee toured Gulfshore Assembly near Pass Christian on March 7, for a first-hand look at the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina to the beachfront facility owned by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

The assembly bore the brunt of Katrina's powerful winds and 32-foot surge as the storm made landfall on August 29, 2005. The assembly's buildings were reduced either to rubble or stripped down to metal and concrete frameworks.

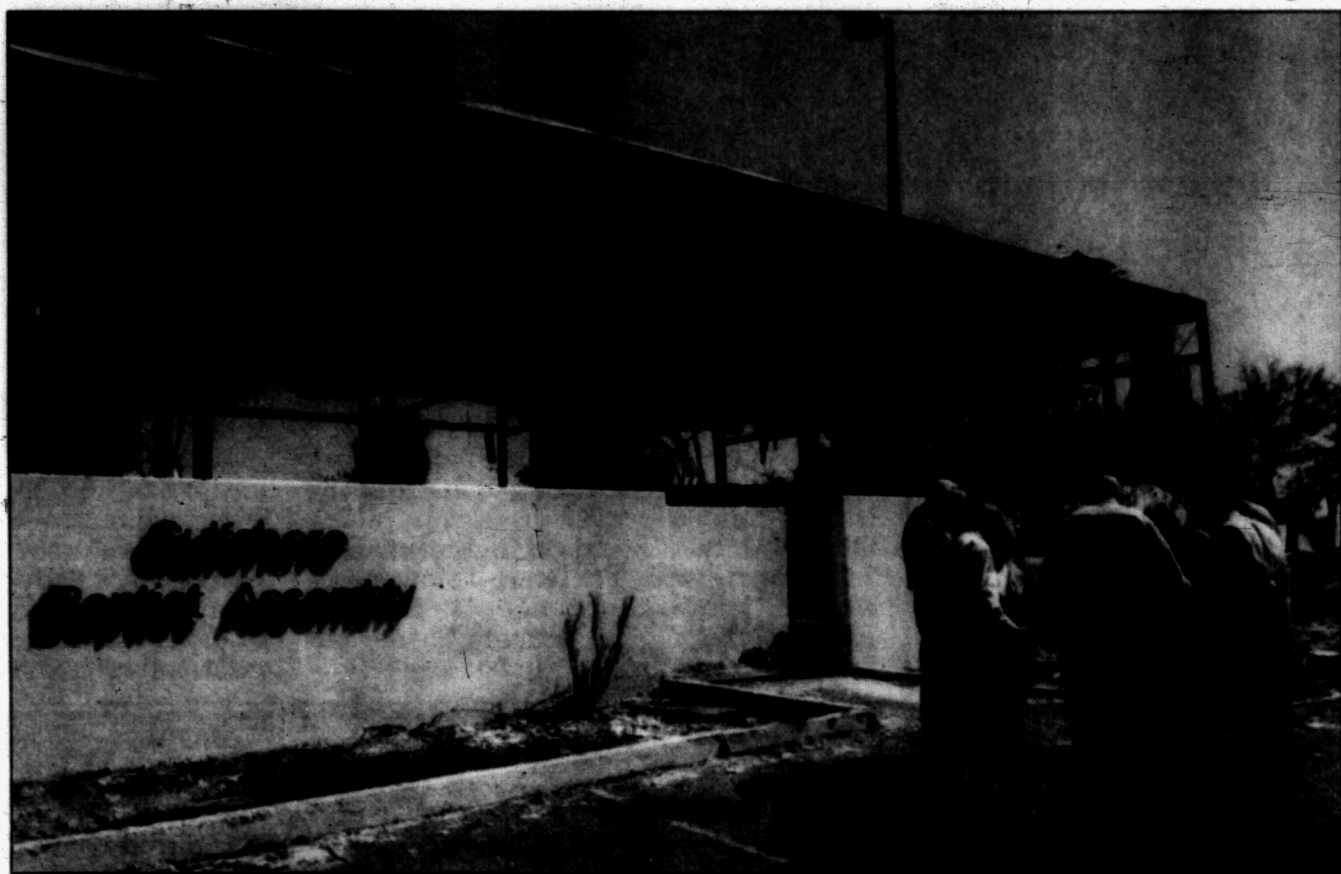
The Conference Ministries Study Committee has been appointed to study the condition of Gulfshore Assembly and to explore all possibilities related to conference ministries in Mississippi.

"The committee's visit to Gulfshore was emotional for all of us. Pictures do not do justice to the impact of the storm on Gulfshore, and the damage sustained there," said Larry Otis, committee chairman and former mayor of Tupelo. Otis is a member of Calvary Church, Tupelo.

Otis and committee members closely inspected the main complex, which lost the walls and contents of the bottom two floors and suffered significant damage to the third/top floor.

Kelly Auditorium and the adjacent swimming pool sustained major damage, and the staff housing complex has been torn down due to structural damage. All other buildings owned by the convention were completely destroyed.

Among the committee members who joined Otis on the trip to Gulfshore were:



**IN PRAYER** — Members of the Conference Ministries Study Committee pause to pray on March 7 in front of the destroyed Kelly Auditorium on the campus of Gulfshore Assembly near Pass Christian. The committee was on a fact finding tour of the facility, which is owned by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina in late August 2005. The committee has been appointed the task of formulating a proposal that will position Mississippi Baptists' conference ministries for the 21st century. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

- Buddy Huff, a Jackson banker and member of First Church, Jackson.

- Bill Hurt, pastor of First Church, Natchez.

- Bobby Kirk, a farmer and member of Roundaway Church, Doddsville. He currently serves as secretary of the executive committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

- Dell Scoper, member of First Church, Laurel. Scoper served as chair of the Building Development Committee that

helped construct the Patterson Place meeting facility at Camp Garaywa.

- Lloyd Sweatt, pastor of Meadowood Church, Amory. He is a member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and the chairman of the board's executive committee.

- Betty Davis, immediate past president of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union and member of First Church, McComb.

Other Conference Ministries Study Committee members are:

- Eric Clark, Mississippi Secretary of State and member of First Church, Brandon. He is a member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

- P.J. Scott, retired pastor of First Church, Olive Branch. He is a member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and the board's executive committee.

"The committee continues to gather information regard-

ing new building code requirements, FEMA rules on flood levels, and options open to the needs of Mississippi Baptists," Otis said.

Otis stressed that the committee has urged interested persons to go to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board web site ([www.mbc.org](http://www.mbc.org)), click on Conference Ministries Study Committee, and provide input on the mission of the committee.

"We continue to seek input from Mississippi Baptists about their experiences at Gulfshore and other conference settings, through e-mails from the convention board website or by writing to: Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Attn: Conference Ministries Study Committee, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530."

At the end of their Gulfshore tour, committee members gathered in front of the ruined Kelly Auditorium and joined hands for prayer.

"In our prayer at Gulfshore, we asked God to guide us and give us a vision for the task assigned to our committee," Otis said.

## Study committee seeking input

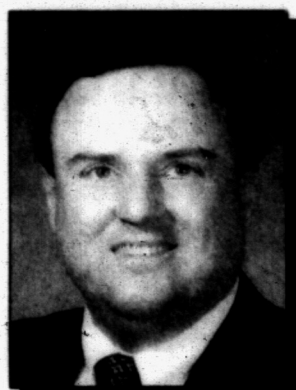
On August 29, Hurricane Katrina struck the Mississippi Gulf Coast and spread unprecedented devastation throughout the state. The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) immediately committed to rebuilding churches and lives across Mississippi. One location that experienced Katrina's full fury is Henderson Point near Pass Christian, longtime site of Gulfshore Baptist Assembly. As a result of this damage, the 2005 President of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, Gene Henderson, appointed a nine-member MBCB Conference Ministries Study Committee to study the condition of Gulfshore Assembly and to explore all possibilities related to our conference ministries in Mississippi. Larry Otis, former Mayor of Tupelo, is serving as committee chairman.

As they continue their study, the MBCB Conference Ministries Study Committee welcomes your thoughts regarding conference ministries in Mississippi. Go to [www.mbc.org](http://www.mbc.org) and click on Conference Ministries Study Committee. If you encounter difficulties with submitting online, you may choose to mail your thoughts to: Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Attn: Conference Ministries Study Committee, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.





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# The face of the enemy

Tom Fox was, by all accounts, a peaceful man. As a matter of fact, the former U.S. Marine Band clarinetist had made peace his life work. A Quaker who traveled to the far reaches of the globe for the cause of peace, Fox arrived in Baghdad last year as part of a Christian Peace Team sent there to protest the war and call attention to ordinary Iraqi citizens being held as detainees with being formally charged with a crime.

This is what he did, and not only against the war in Iraq. He was against all war and all oppression everywhere, and he put feet to his convictions. He wasn't Southern Baptist and while we may not agree with his political views or his methods of calling attention to what he considered to be injustices, he was a Christian and a man who believed he was following God's will.

He was abducted the day after Thanksgiving last year by a group of Islamic fundamentalist insurgents calling themselves the "Swords of Righteousness." Taken along with Fox were fellow peace activists James Loney, age 41, Harmeet Singh Sooden, age 32, both of Canada, and British Baptist Norman Kimber, age 74.



Tom Fox with Palestinian children in 2005

For a while, there were videotaped snippets of Fox and his captive cohorts broadcast on Arab satellite networks. The tapes trailed off, however, and nothing was heard from the four activists for some time. Then, another tape appeared last week showing three of the four hostages. Tom Fox was missing from the video, and terrorism observers both inside and outside the U. S. government saw that as a disturbing development.

Tom Fox's body was found on March 9 in a filthy garbage dump just outside Baghdad. He had been shot in the head and chest, and his body showed signs of torture.

The placement of his body in the dump was no accident; rather it was a final sign of his captors' disrespect for him and his Christian-based mission of peace.

Nothing is presently known of the fate of Fox's friends Loney, Sooden, and Kimber.

Perhaps now, through the senseless killing of this good man who wanted nothing more than peace and justice for the Iraqi people, we will come face-to-face with the reality of Satan's handiwork in Iraq and around the world.

These so-called insurgents were not indigent tribesmen in South America who knew no better. These were calculating terrorists making a political statement with a man's life, Islamic fundamentalists who likely shouted "Allahu Akbar (God is Great)" while torturing and slaughtering yet another Christian.

We must understand that our greatest enemy, Satan, daily continues his dark work around the world, seeking whom he would devour (1 Peter 5:8) and those he will gladly destroy — including every one of us.

We must grasp how much people around the world need the Gospel, and how important it is that we reach them before it is too late. We must understand and take seriously this daunting opposition to our obedience (Matthew 28:18-20). There may not be much time left, so let us not be deterred.

The time is now. The place is the world. Tom Fox understood that. We should, too.

Editor's note: March 14 is Substance Abuse Prevention Sunday across the Southern Baptist Convention.

The writing of this article is providential, as I have recently celebrated 18 years of freedom from alcoholism and drug addiction.

I write that introductory sentence with curiosity over the reaction which would have come from members of our faith 50 years ago, 20 years ago, or even today.

As we know, the perception among both non-believers and believers struggling with sin is that they will be judged harshly for their shortcomings by Christians. My personal experience is to the contrary. I recall, for example, admitting my drug addiction to my grandmother, who at that time was in her 70s and the most devout Christian I knew. The love and understanding she expressed to me was overwhelming. The forgiveness of Christ was exemplified through her actions (John 13:15).

In later years, her Godly reaction to my startling news was a major factor in my salvation experience. Thus, my own personal experience does not support the common (judgmental) criticism used often against Christians. However, what I have found more often is that we as believers struggle with prevention of, or finding Biblical solutions for, drug addiction and alcoholism.

## GUEST OPINION:



### Don't turn away from the addicted

By John Holaday  
Brandon

The natural inclination of many Christians is to avoid problems such as drug addiction altogether. Our lives are built around family, church activities, and work. While this paradigm may be healthy and even Biblical, it can result all too often in a Christian cocoon. That is, other than happenstance encounters with troubled non-believers or inactive Christians, the only people that we are usually surrounded by are fellow active believers.

I am not attempting to cast such a lifestyle in a negative light, as it is wonderful to be in the company of fellow Christians. However, the concern is that we do not become prepared to respond to those who are deep in sin and who need our help. My suggestion is that we become educated about the nature of alcoholism and addiction and how these illnesses affect people and their families.

If we are to be the light of the world, as Jesus told us in Matthew 5:14, we must be armed with education and knowledge

as well as Scripture and prayer. Armed with these weapons, our light will help reveal to others the destructive nature of alcohol and drug abuse.

Once educated, we are ready to meet the needs of those trapped in sin. In the darkest moments of my desperation as an active drug addict, my greatest need was relief from emotional and mental turmoil. When I would attempt to stop using or drinking, I would be left with a void usually filled by those chemicals. Our obligation as Christians is to persuade others that their void can be filled with an everlasting relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We must always be ready to make a defense that His way is the right way, the only way (1 Peter 3:15).

When we are given opportunities to minister to people affected by drug addiction and alcoholism, we must remember to do so with gentleness and love (Philippians 4:5). Although we must be careful of charlatans

and those individuals who are not sincere in their desire for help, our charge is to be Christlike in the way we help others. Again, we ought to state our case yet with gentleness and reverence (1 Peter 3:15).

We will have opportunities to meet this need, as the need is great. Our next generation is overwhelmed with this plight. The U. S. Department of Justice reports that in 2004, 70.6% of high school seniors used drugs or alcohol during the 12 months preceding the survey. Likewise, 34.3% of this group admitted to using marijuana or other illicit substances in the subject 12-month period.

Perhaps even more troubling are statistics from researcher George Barna. He reports that 17% of all adults do not consider it immoral to use drugs not prescribed by a medical doctor. To prove my earlier point that many Christians have buried their heads in the sand on this issue, Barna has also stated that six percent of evangelical Christians and 11% of born again Christians likewise believe there is nothing immoral about using drugs not prescribed by a medical doctor.

We must join together, become educated and make ready our defense in the love of Jesus Christ. I, for one, will be eternally grateful for my loving grandmother who welcomed and met her Biblical charge.

Holaday is a member of Pinelake Church, Brandon.



# Suspected church arsonists arrested in Ala.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Law enforcement officials announced on March 8 the arrests of three men in connection with a string of Alabama church fires that had terrorized the state since early February.

The three men are Benjamin Nathan Moseley, 19, of Birmingham, Ala.; Russell Lee DeBusk Jr., 19, of Hoover, Ala.; and Matthew Lee Cloyd, 20, of Indian Springs, Ala. According to press reports, Moseley and DeBusk are students at Birmingham-Southern College and Cloyd is a student at the University of Alabama.

Officials filed criminal complaints against the three men in connection with arson at nine Baptist church fires in February. Four of the nine were Southern Baptist. It is not known if officials believe the men are connected with a 10th church fire that was set in late February.

Alabama Gov. Bob Riley called it a "good day for Alabama" and praised investigators for working together.

"[W]e believe this is an isolated incident," Riley said at a news conference. "We don't think that there is any type of conspiracy against organized religion or against the Baptists ... [or] against religious beliefs in particular."

He added: "Alabama and all of the faith-based communities in this state can rest a little easier."

Five church fires were set late Feb. 2, followed by another four late Feb. 6.

According to a nine-page criminal complaint filed in U.S. district court, tire tracks found at the scene of the church fires eventually led investigators to the three men. The tire tracks were consistent with the tire tracks found on Cloyd's green 2000 Toyota 4Runner, which is registered in his mother's name, according to the complaint. Impressions of the tire tracks were found at six of the churches, the complaint said.

Cloyd told an unidentified witness in the complaint that he and Moseley "did it as a joke and it got out of hand," the complaint said. Officials interviewed Moseley and DeBusk, both of whom admitted to being involved, according to the complaint.



Southern Baptist Convention President Bobby Welch (right) prays with Duane Schliep (center), pastor of Rehobeth Church, and Ala. Gov. Bob Riley in front of what was left of the church after it was gutted by fire Feb. 3. (BP photo by Doug Rogers/Alabama State Board of Missions)

"Moseley said that after they set fire to the first two churches they saw fire trucks driving by. Moseley said that after that, burning the other three churches became too spontaneous," the complaint said.

The first two fires that first night apparently were to Rehobeth Church and Ashby Church, both Southern Baptist churches. Both were destroyed.

According to the document, all three men were involved the first night and had been hunting deer. DeBusk kicked in the door on two of the churches, the complaint said. On the final night, Feb. 6, only Moseley and Cloyd were involved, it said. Those four churches in the western part of the state "were burned as a diversion to throw investigators off," the complaint said.

Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, said the state convention has "full faith in the thoroughness of the law enforcement officials as to how they have handled the investigation process."

"We continue to

work toward the goal of helping the churches come to a full recovery from these terrible circumstances which they have experienced," he said in a statement. "Our prayers are with these church families as they plan for the future. As believers we are confident that good can come from bad events. What others meant for harm, our Lord can use for His good purposes."

Alabama Attorney General Troy King said he was "very, very proud" of law enforcement officials.

"What they have done is just good, old-fashioned police work," he said. "Because of their work, what we have today is a reign of terror that has gripped rural Alabama and [has] riveted the eyes of the nation upon Alabama... coming to an end."

## Looking back

10 years ago

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Executive Committee affirmed a Convention-appointed special committee plan concerning the sale of the campus of Clarke College, the former Baptist-owned junior college in Newton, to Three Springs, Inc.

20 years ago

A statement acknowledging theological diversity within the Southern Baptist Convention is adopted by the SBC Peace Committee. It is "a predication on which we can attempt to build relationships through which and by which we can do missions together," according to committee chairman Charles Fuller.

60 years ago

Joe Abrams, pastor of Shuqualak Church, accepts the call to serve as associate in the Training Union Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

## DeVile classic on DVD

KANSAS CITY, Kan. (BP) — Cecil B. DeMille's Oscar-winning classic, *The Ten Commandments*, debuted as a three-disc collector's edition DVD on March 21 from Paramount Home Video. Nominated for six Academy Awards and winner for best special effects, DeMille's 1956 remake stars Charlton Heston as Moses leading God's chosen people from an enslaved existence in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. Yul Brynner costars as the Pharaoh who needed a great deal of convincing before allowing the Israelites to flee. Filmed in Egypt and the Sinai with one of the biggest sets ever constructed for a motion picture and truly a cast of thousands, the newly restored and remastered biblical epic has a rare on-screen introduction by Cecil B. DeMille himself, is enhanced by a Dolby surround stereo soundtrack, and features a commentary by Katherine Orrison — author of *Written in Stone: Making Cecil B. DeMille's Epic, The Ten Commandments*. Heightened by the depictions of plagues, the parting of the Red Sea and the creation of the tablets containing God's Holy Commandments, the 220-minute extravaganza moves along with a satisfying pace and a standout performance by Heston. The 3-disc set contains the original 1923 silent version, also directed by DeMille, and there are extras including a six-part documentary.



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## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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# Record



## DOCTRINE AND DISPOSITION

At times people who know the Lord experience a disconnect between their doctrine and their disposition. Doctrine is vitally important in the Christian life because it encompasses commitment to the Word of God and what it teaches to the degree that those teachings possess us and are seen in us. It is belief that is literally translated into behavior. All of us live just moments away from something happening, being what we would prefer not to be, and acting in a way that we later regret because it is not who we are or who we truly want to be.

You may be driving home from a Bible study where the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was being explained. In that instructive setting you came to know that the Spirit of God could come and take control of the anger that may flare up in us, empower, and enable us to deal with wrongs. On the way home some driver may do a thoughtless thing and suddenly your emotions overwhelm you, resulting in unkind and even unchristian behavior, but all is not lost because the same Spirit of God, who gives strength to overcome those things, comes alongside, points out the failure, and even shows a different response. You will face some of the same kind of moments again in the future, and the Lord will be there to help you.

Sometimes we pride ourselves in being doctrinally pure and biblically correct, but we too often display something that is contrary to what we say we believe. Our doctrine and our disposition do not match up. Recently, I had gotten on an airplane and was facing a long



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

flight. I got to my assigned seat, sat down, buckled up, and waited for the hours ahead. Everybody was not on board yet, and so we sat there as more and more people came. When the plane was almost full, one last group of folks, a family, came on the plane. I knew when they came down the aisle they were going to be sitting around me. It was a large family — a man, his wife, and their six children. Sure enough, down the aisle they came directly toward me. They began to help the children get into the seats where they were supposed to be. They were beside me, behind me, and in front of me. I knew we were about to be locked in this little capsule for hours together. Now these were not young adults. These were all children, the youngest being a one-year-old boy. The plane took off and the time began to pass. I waited for them to get agitated, or irritated, or for some or one of them to explode. Hour after hour passed and nothing happened. In fact, several hours later when we arrived at our destination nothing at all had taken place. The mother held the little one-year-old most of the time, and all he ever did was just smile and giggle. As we arrived at our destination, I commented to the dad and the mom about what great kids they had.

They both acknowledged my appreciation with a knowing kind of acceptance that basically indicated it was not always that way, but it was that day.

I said to the young flight attendant, "Don't you wish everybody who gets on board smiled as he does?" referring to the little one-year-old. The flight attendant replied, "Do I ever! You just would not believe how some people — grown people — act." I said, "Really?" He said, "Really!" He went on to tell me that one day he came to work with one of these clip-on pacifiers that you can pull out, extend, and recoil. He said that he planned to wear it and when somebody started whining and fussing about some little trivial thing he was just going to pull it out and hand it to the person. The airline that he worked for wasn't in agreement with his clever idea and so he never used it, but he said there were many times he wanted to use it.

Probably all of us somewhere, sometime, either at our job or home, at school, or even at church have needed one of those pacifiers. It may have never happened to you, but there have been a couple of times when I have been talking to some church folks about something so small, so insignificant, so absolutely unimportant, and I wished that I had

one of those pacifiers on a reel just to pull it out, hand it to them, and say, "This ought to take care of your need."

Years ago I knew some folks who were members of a church, and they got terribly upset because someone gave the church a brand new van. What they were perturbed about was the fact that the church had not voted on accepting the van, and they thought that the church ought to reject the gift. Well, bless your heart, they created enough commotion that they did vote, and they voted not to accept the van. In addition to their actions not being terribly smart, it was also terribly childish to the point where other people gave in to the behavioral temper tantrum.

Let me suggest a better thing for you and me to do. Rather than us going around with a bag full of pacifiers handing them out, it might help each of us to ask God to help us grow up. Ask God for the impact of His teaching, His Word, and His doctrine to be such a part of our being that it makes a difference in the way we act and react so that when people see us no matter what the conditions, we are acting the way Jesus acted and lived.

Paul instructed the early believers in that very way in Ephesians 4:32 when he said, "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted forgiving one another, even as God for Christ sake has forgiven you." Now that disposition will change the atmosphere in a home, in a church, or in your life.

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### YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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# Wal-Mart bows to Plan B abortion pressure

WASHINGTON (BP) — Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer, has dealt a blow to pro-life Americans. The retail giant announced March 3 that all of its pharmacies would begin stocking Plan B, an "emergency contraceptive" with abortion-causing properties. Wal-Mart had been the largest chain store that did not sell the controversial drug nationwide before its policy reversal, which will take effect March 20.

The action followed decisions by two states requiring Plan B to be sold in Wal-Mart stores and a campaign by abortion rights organizations calling for a policy change.

Wal-Mart's decision means at least the top four sellers of pharmaceutical products in the United States all stock Plan B. In 2004, Walgreen ranked first in pharmacy sales, with CVS, Wal-Mart and Rite Aid in order from second to fourth, according to the National Association of Chain Drug Stores.

The Wal-Mart action will reduce dramatically options for some pro-life Americans who seek to shop at pharmacies that do not sell "emergency contraceptives." With more than 3,000 pharmacies nationwide, Wal-Mart operates in some communities where there are few alternatives.

Plan B, as well as another "morning-after" pill known as Preven, is basically a heavier dose of birth control pills. Under the regimen, a woman takes two pills within 72 hours of sexual intercourse and another dose 12 hours later. The "morning-after" pill not only works to restrict ovu-

lation in a woman, but it can act after conception, thereby causing an abortion, pro-lifers point out. The method can block implantation of a tiny embryo in the uterine wall.

Previously, Wal-Mart stocked Plan B only in its pharmacies in Illinois and Massachusetts, where it was required. The Wal-Mart announcement of its policy change came less than three weeks after the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Pharmacy voted Feb. 14 to require the chain to stock the product. After the Massachusetts action, Wal-Mart said it was re-evaluating its policy nationwide.

Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal ruled March 2 that state's insurance plan for its 188,000 employees and retirees should not cover prescriptions at Wal-Mart unless the chain stocks the "morning-after" pill, the Associated Press reported.

"We expect more states to require us to sell emergency contraceptives in the months ahead," said Ron Comiuk, Wal-Mart's vice president of pharmacy, in a written release. "Because of this, and the fact that this is [approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration], we feel it is difficult to justify being the country's only major pharmacy chain not selling it."

"This decision has been made after careful consideration and in the belief that we are doing what is best for the business, while respecting our individual associates."

A Wal-Mart spokesperson told Baptist Press March 6 the company would not be granti-

ng interviews or making further comments on the decision. Wal-Mart did announce it would continue to permit pharmacists who conscientiously object to filling prescriptions for Plan B to refer customers to another pharmacist or pharmacy, except where such a policy is against the law.

Douglas Scott, president of Life Decisions International, said Wal-Mart's executives had chosen to "turn their backs on American families."

"It is up to the pro-family movement to let Wal-Mart know that the decision is not in its best interest from either a moral or business perspective," Scott said in a written release. "No company that chooses to sell such a controversial and deadly substance should be given a free ride."

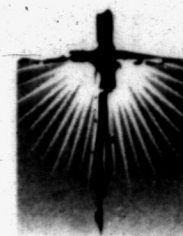
Abortion-rights leaders applauded Wal-Mart's decision to sell Plan B but criticized its maintenance of a conscientious objection poli-

cy. "Stocking E.C. [the emergency contraceptive] is a good first step," said Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA), in a written statement, "but women need to know they can get their contraceptive prescriptions filled immediately at Wal-Mart."

PPFA, the National Organization for Women, and NARAL Pro-choice America applied pressure to Wal-Mart, with NARAL sending the company more than 31,000 petitions.

Illinois began the state pressure on Wal-Mart to change its policy on "emergency contraceptives" last year when Gov. Rod Blagojevich, a Democrat, ordered Plan B's sale in all pharmacies.

The FDA has approved prescription use of both Plan B and Preven. The FDA is considering whether to permit over-the-counter sale of Plan B without a prescription to women 16 years of age and older.



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## Scalia not optimistic about Roe

WASHINGTON (BP) — South Dakota's enactment of a ban on abortion has boosted hopes the new law might be the vehicle for a reversal of *Roe v. Wade*, but U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonin Scalia said recently he doubts the current Supreme Court would overturn the 1973 opinion that legalized abortion nationwide, and he doesn't know if it ever will.

Speaking to a gathering of Swiss professors and students on March 8, Scalia, whose opposition to *Roe* is well known, said when asked if the highly criticized ruling would be reversed by the high court, "I have no idea. I have no idea whether it will be. It is not likely to be overturned with the current court, because there are still five justices on our court who voted in favor of *Roe v. Wade*. So, if I had to guess, I would say, 'Not yet — maybe not [ever] — but certainly not yet.'"

Scalia's remarks were reported by LifeNews.com, which based its article on a French Audio-Visual Bureau news report.

If *Roe* is overturned, abortion would not be outlawed in the country. Such a ruling would simply return the issue to each state, which would decide whether or not to enact bans on the procedure.

## Transportation options to, during SBC announced

GREENSBORO, N.C. (BP) — Good options are available for both airline and automotive travel to the Southern Baptist Convention's 2006 annual meeting in Greensboro, N.C., John R. (Jack) Wilkerson, vice president for business and finance and convention manager of the SBC Executive Committee, has noted.

Wilkerson said air travel for the SBC's June 13-14 sessions in the Greensboro Coliseum can be arranged either for Greensboro's Piedmont Triad International Airport, which is served by most major airlines, or the Raleigh-Durham International Airport, which is served by Southwest Airlines and other carriers. Most Greensboro-area hotels offer free shuttle service to and from the airport.

Wilkerson said shuttles again will be available to and from most Greensboro-area hotels to the coliseum for the SBC sessions and for Sunday-Monday events such as the Pastors' Conference and Woman's Missionary Union sessions. Hotel shuttle tickets will be available at the coliseum for \$10, with children 12 and under riding free with parents who purchase tickets.

New and expanded childcare and children's conferences have been planned for the Greensboro meeting, with registration information available at the annual meeting section of the SBC's [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net) website.

## STAFF CHANGES



Grumbach

David W. Grumbach, has resigned as pastor of Petal-Harvey Church, Petal, to assume the pastorate of Heritage Church, Montgomery, Ala.

Victory Church, Bassfield, has called George Gerald Aultman as pastor. Aultman, who has been retired for 12 years, last pastored Maybank Church in Hattiesburg.

Bethesda Church, Terry, has called Robbie Britt as pas-

tor. Shown are Britt, Tammy Britt, Joshua Britt, and Mackenzie Britt.



Britt and Family, Bethesda Church, Terry



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# JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Organ Dedication, First Church, Cleveland



## MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS

12. Concord Church, Ackerman, will host a singing with New Genesis Mar. 25, 6 p.m. Roger Griffith, pastor.

13. First Church, Calhoun City, is hosting a reception for retiring Associational Missions Director Wayne Gullet Mar. 26, 2-4 p.m. Gullet has served Calhoun Association 21 years.

14. Broadmoor Church, Madison, is hosting pioneering and best-selling comedienne Chonda Pierce on her A Piece of My Mind Tour with special guest Tim Hawkins Apr. 22, 6 p.m. Advance tickets are \$19, and are available at the church and at select Christian bookstores. Tickets are also available by phone at (800) 965-9324 or online at [www.Premier-Productions.com](http://www.Premier-Productions.com) or [www.i-tickets.com](http://www.i-tickets.com). Group pricing available. For more information, call (601) 898-4974.

15. First Church, Vicksburg, is hosting composer and arranger Mark Hayes Apr. 8-9. Hayes will conduct a keyboard workshop Sat. from 1:30-4 p.m. and will be in concert 3 p.m. Sun. For more information, call (601) 636-2493.

16. Cedar View Church, Olive Branch, will host a community singing Mar. 18, 6 p.m., featuring The Low-Note Duo (Charley May and Jerry Lee Smith).

7. Pastor James F. Pinkerton of Harmontown Church, Como, had to wear a "funny hat" if the church's \$3000 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal was met. The offering was \$3155.



7. Lottie Moon Offering Goal Met, Harmontown Church, Como

8. Park Haven Church, Laurel, will host their third annual live drive through crucifixion Mar. 31-Apr. 1, 7-9 p.m.

9. Tiplersville Church, Tiplersville, held a deacon's ordination Jan. 22. Shown, from left, are Mark Franz, Randy Futral, and Mike McMillin.

10. Highland Church, Adams Association, exceeded their \$6,000 goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

11. Moselle Memorial Church, Moselle, is hosting a gospel singing featuring the Mark Trammell Trio Mar. 19, 6 p.m. A love offering will be taken.



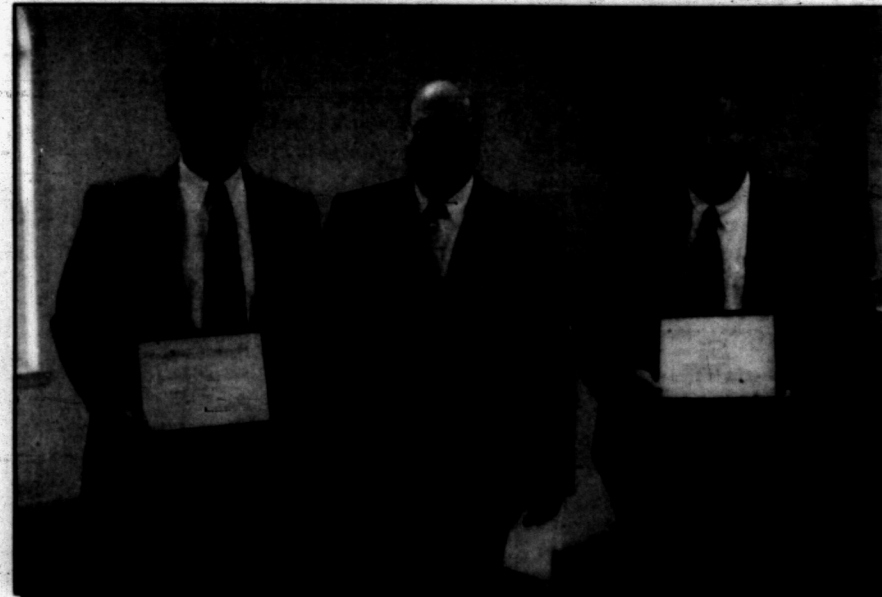
2. Deacon Ordination, Stepping Stone Church, Port Gibson



3. Freeman Ordination, Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto



4. Sanders and Addy, Sunrise Church, Leake County



9. Franz, Futral, and McMillin, Tiplersville Church, Tiplersville



6. Display of 50 Crosses, Crestwood Church, Booneville





1. Biloxi Regional Medical Center Donates \$25,000 to WCC

1. Mary Stewart, left, dean of the Joseph and Nancy Fail School of Nursing at William Carey College, receives a \$25,000 check from Pam McVey, chief nursing officer at Biloxi Regional Medical Center. The funds will be used for nursing scholarships, equipment and supplies for the three nursing departments located on Carey's Hattiesburg, Gulf Coast and New Orleans campuses.

2. Mezzo-soprano Terry Patrick Harris will perform in concert Mar. 23 at 7:30 p.m. in the Smith Auditorium on the Hattiesburg campus of William Carey College.



Harris

General admission is \$5 and tickets will be available at the door. WCC students are admitted free of charge. For more information call the school of music at (601) 318-6175.

3. Larry Kennedy, president of William Carey College, announced recently that Argile Smith, former chair of the division of pastoral ministries at New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS), is the new vice president for advancement at Carey.



Smith

4. The Mississippi College School of Business was proud to host State

Treasurer Tate Reeves Mar. 2. Reeves spoke to governmental accounting students.

5. Mississippi College will host its second annual Deep South Debates Mar. 24-25. Approximately 15 teams from four southern states are expected to participate. For more information call Web Drake at (601) 925-3454 or email wdrake@mc.edu.

6. Betty Sue McGarvey was inaugurated as the Baptist Memorial College of Health Sciences in Memphis, Tenn., second president Mar. 3, 1 p.m., at First Church, Memphis.

7. William Carey College announced the recipients of this year's Higher Education Appreciation Day — Working for Academic Excellence Award (HEADWAE). Thomas J. Rauch III, associate professor of biology, and Elaine Storey Case, a biology major from Brookhaven, were honored at the HEADWAE awards banquet in Jackson. These awards are given through the state of Mississippi to educators and students who demonstrate excellence in education.

8. William Carey College is hosting its 2006 Career Fair Mar. 28, 1-4 p.m. in the Wilkes Dining Hall Student Conference Center. For more information, call Clara Reedy at (601) 318-6209.

9. The Mississippi College Department of Communication and the 2005-06 Shakespeare Festival will present The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged) for their 2006 production.



7. HEADWAE Honorees, WCC

Performances are Mar. 23-26 and Apr. 6-9, 7 p.m. nightly, with matinees at 2 p.m. Sundays. General admission, \$5; students and senior adults, \$3; ticket line, (601) 925-3935.

10. William Carey College will present Spring Fling '06 March 25 from 8:30 a.m. until 1:15 p.m. on the Hattiesburg campus. Spring Fling '06 is a fun way for freshmen and transfer students to learn about the college and register for classes. For more information, call (601) 318-6103, (800) 962-5991, ext. 103 or email admissions@wmc Carey.edu.

11. The Honorable Charles Pickering, retired federal judge, Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, was among several distinguished guests who attended the Celebration of Leadership honoring William Carey College president Larry Kennedy. Shown are Pickering, Margaret Ann Pickering, Sarah Kennedy, and Kennedy.

12. Mississippi College will host its second annual Deep South Debates Mar. 24-25. Approximately 15 teams from four southern states are expected to participate. For more information call Web Drake at (601) 925-3454 or email wdrake@mc.edu.



11. Pickering Attends Celebration of Leadership at WCC

## OBITUARIES

William R. "Bill" Herman, 47, minister of music at New Hebron Church, New Hebron, died Mar. 1 at Forrest General Hospital, Hattiesburg, with burial at Oloh Cemetery, Oloh. He is survived by his wife, Barbara Pace Herman of New Hebron; his mother, Mona Pollock Herman of Petal; two sisters, Sonja Herman Garner of Petal and Tammy Herman Carney of Brandon; two nieces and seven nephews. He was a member of the Mississippi Singing Churchmen.

James Kelva Moore, 87, of Newton and Meridian, died Mar. 2 in Meridian. He was a professor in the School of Religious Education at New Orleans Seminary from 1953-1976. During his min-

istry he served churches in Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma, Florida, and Alabama. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Betty Ruth Moore, children, and grandchildren.

Calvin Gibson, pastor, Calvary Indian Church, Union, died Jan. 6 at Riley's Hospital, Meridian. Gibson was a servant leader of the New Choctaw Association, serving as a moderator, vice-moderator, associational music director, and other positions. His funeral was Jan. 9 at Pearl River Church, Choctaw. He is survived by his wife Delilah, children Alyssa, Jamison, Lisa, Jodie, Tristan, several grandchildren, his mother Lillie Gibson, and brothers and a sister.

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## REVIVALS & HOMECOMINGS

Holly Springs Church, Brookhaven: Homecoming, Mar. 19; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 10:20 a.m.; noon covered dish lunch; Harold McClendon, speaker; Strong River, music; Glen McInnis, pastor.

Maybank Church, Hattiesburg: Revival, Mar. 19-24; Sun., 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; speakers include Freddie Odom, Gerald Penton, Barry Armstrong, Jim Windham, James Grimsley, Scott Murphy, and Jon Kittrell; Jerry Purvis, music.

Sandersville Church, Sandersville: Revival, Mar. 19-22; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Randy Turner, speaker; Buddy McElroy, music.

Ridglea Heights Church, Moss Point: Revival, Mar. 26-29; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon and 7 p.m.; Don Boone, Daphne, Ala., speaker; Steve Cirlot, pastor.

Cliff Temple Church, Natchez: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Mar. 25-26; Sat., visit and reminisce, 3 p.m.; salad dinner, 5 p.m.; singing and preaching by former pastors, 6:30 p.m.; Sun., Sunday School, 9 a.m.; worship, 10 a.m.; covered dish lunch, noon; Bill Dowdy, Don Womble, and Joel Haire, speakers; Arron McGuffee, pastor.

Becker Church, Becker: Revival, Mar. 19-24; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Gene Douglas, speaker; Greg Beaty, music; David Jay, pastor.



## Bibliocipher

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FNKASG TAE CAG ELR  
WRNE PLOHL YRGOXLREL,  
KSE CAG ELNE WRNE  
PLOHL RTBSGREL STEA  
RIRGFNXEOTD FOCR,  
PLOHL ELR XAT AC WNT  
XLNFF DOIR STEA UAS:  
CAG LOW LNEL DAB ELR  
CNELRG XRNFRB.

VALT XOQ: EPRTU-XRIRT

Clue: F = L

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Six: Forty-One.

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**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, ELKIN, NC,** is seeking a full-time minister of youth. Seminary or divinity degree required. The minister will coordinate programs, lead, and minister to the K-12 children and families. Send inquiries: Personnel Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 618, Elkin, NC, 28621. Email: 1stbaptistelkin@earthlink.net, website: www.elkinbfc.org.

**MULBERRY BAPTIST CHURCH IN HOUMA, LA** is searching for new pastor. If interested, please forward resume to Search Committee, 2025 Bayou Black Drive, Houma, LA 70360.

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# MissionLab volunteers take on New Orleans cleanup

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — A simple act of service spoke volumes to Sid Allen. "To me they represent what the church should be," Allen said after volunteers cleaned out his flood-damaged home. "They came and gave of themselves and asked for nothing in return."

The volunteers were Southern Baptists who came to New Orleans through the MissionLab program at New Orleans Seminary (NOBS) in late January. These volunteers are making a significant impact on the NOBS campus and in the neighborhoods near the seminary as well.

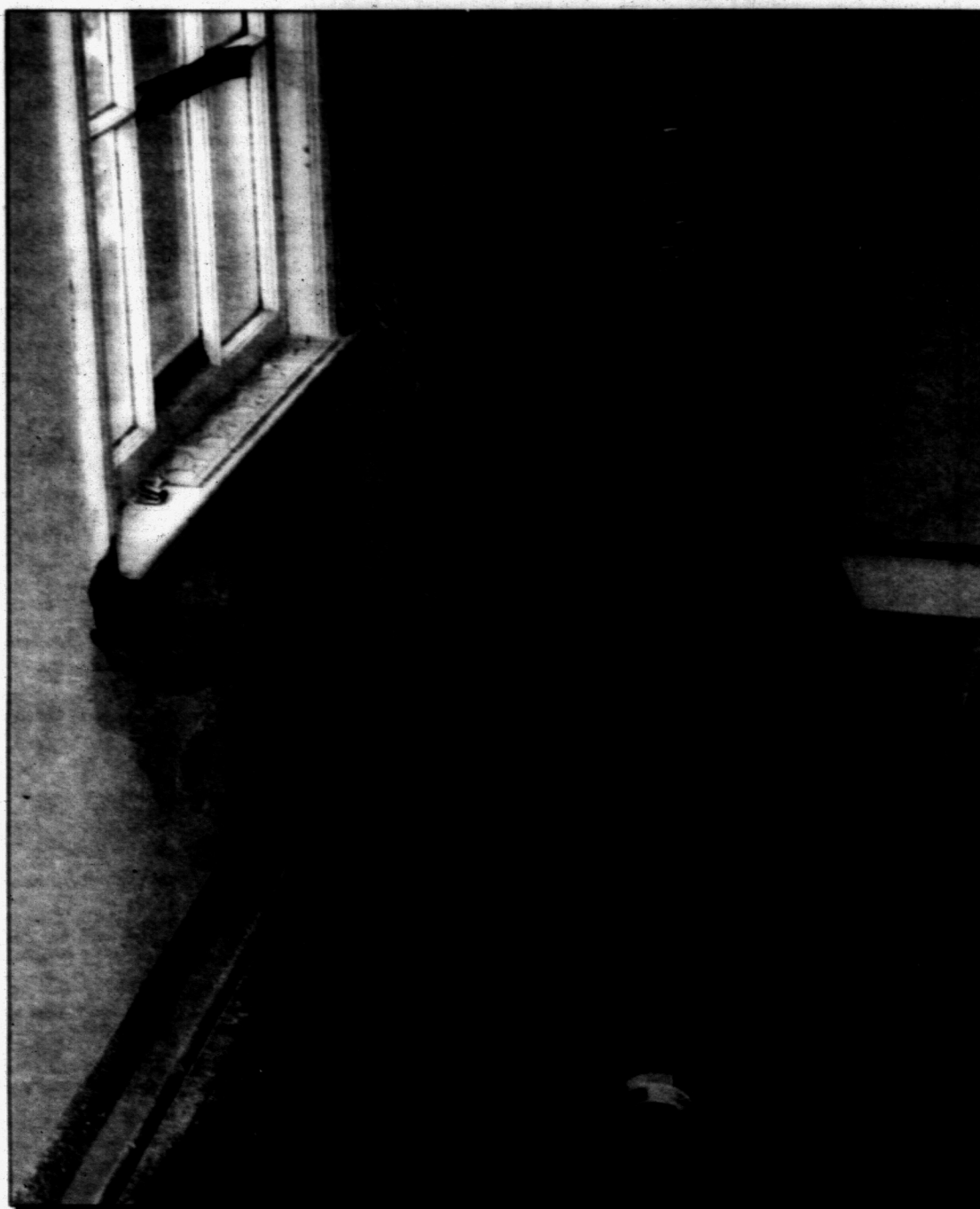
The seminary launched MissionLab in 1999 to provide custom mission experiences for youth, college students and senior adults. Before the hurricane, MissionLab focused on urban ministry outside the seminary gates.

Hurricane Katrina presented a unique challenge for MissionLab. Flooding left the city virtually empty and NOBS campus housing severely damaged. Meanwhile, many Baptists began calling to offer help with campus restoration.

The MissionLab staff adapted for new needs. They began scheduling volunteers to help clean and restore the campus. However, from the start, MissionLab directors Bob and Linda Jackson hoped volunteers also would be able to help restore homes in the community. That goal was reached in January.

Since Oct. 31, when seminary cleanup began, volunteers have cleaned out and painted numerous campus apartments and buildings, trimmed trees, laid new sod and installed new fencing. The results are tangible — Southern Baptist volunteers have saved the seminary an estimated \$1 million in labor costs.

During the week of Feb. 19, volunteers from First in Collierville, Tenn., continued the on-campus restoration work. Nine members of the church repainted student and staff apartments on Lipsey Street, getting the campus ready for reopening later this spring. This was the second team sent from the



GETTING READY — On New Orleans Seminary's campus, George Lofton from First Church in Collierville, Tenn., prepares a student apartment for a fresh coat of paint. (BP photo by Gary D. Myers)

Tennessee church and plans are under way to send two more groups.

Volunteers are still needed to help with the mammoth restoration effort on campus. However, when large groups of volunteers come to campus, the Jacksons send some into the neighborhoods to help homeowners like Sid Allen.

Allen fled to Kentucky after the storm and returned to his job in New Orleans at The Bridge House, a drug and alcohol recovery program, in October. Because of his work schedule, Allen couldn't find time to gut his flooded home. His neighbor had received help from MissionLab, so Allen gave the Jacksons a call.

Volunteers from First Church in New Port Richey, Fla., and Central Church in Marlow, Okla., spent a day and a half gutting Allen's home. The job would have taken Allen weeks. Allen was overwhelmed by the act of kindness.

"They were really a blessing," Allen said. The group even took Allen out for lunch after they finished at his home.

Post-hurricane adaptability also will mark the seven-week MissionLab youth program this summer. Traditional MissionLab ministry areas such as the public housing projects and mission centers may not be open this summer. MissionLab staffers, searching for ministry opportunities, noticed entire neighborhoods of FEMA trailers parked in front of severely damaged homes as owners work to salvage and rebuild.

The staffers saw the clusters of trailers as perfect locations for block parties and backyard Bible clubs.

"The neat thing is the openness for allowing us to come into these neighborhoods," said Rob Wilton, chapel pastor for MissionLab. "The ministry that we are going to be a part of is going to be unbelievable."

Wilton said the MissionLab staffers are praying for a movement of God and many to accept Christ when 200 youth per week descend on the city for the outreach this summer.

## Mississippian reelected as GuideStone trustee chairman

DALLAS (BP and local reports) — GuideStone Financial Resources trustees accepted the recommendation of their nominating committee and reelected William T. "Dale" Patterson of Jackson as chairman for a one-year term during their regularly-scheduled meeting on Feb. 27-28 in Dallas.

"Each of our ministry areas contributed to enhancing the financial security of our participants in 2005," GuideStone Financial Resources President O. S. Hawkins told trustees of the Southern Baptist entity.

Trustees also heard reports from John R. Jones, chief operating officer, and Jeffrey P. Billinger, treasurer and chief financial officer.

Addressing trustees from Ecclesiastes 9:10, which states, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might," Hawkins cited GuideStone's vision statement: "GuideStone Financial Resources exists to honor the Lord by being a life-long partner with its participants in enhancing their financial security."

"In order to accomplish our vision," Hawkins noted, "we must demonstrate insight, initiative and intensity."

Jones then updated trustees on how GuideStone's program areas — retirement, investments, insurance and

financial assistance — enhanced participants' financial security.

"We have completed a year that added value to our participants' accounts and provided discounts to many of our personal plan participants in life and health products," Jones said.

Retirement contributions and rollovers into GuideStone's retirement plans grew by 7 percent during the past year, he said.

Additionally, more than 5,000 participants have taken advantage of the Morningstar Retirement Manager software to help them in their retirement planning and asset allocation, Jones reported, "and over 30% have implemented advice provided by this online tool."

Of particular note was the success of GuideStone's retirement investment funds. For the three years ending Dec. 31, 2005, 10 of the 13 GuideStone Funds mutual funds (CS4 class) were ranked in the top half of their peer universe by Lipper Inc. The Reuters-owned company provides a nationally recognized comparison of the total return performance of mutual funds within a universe of funds having similar investment objectives.

In addition, for each of the three-year time periods ending Dec. 31, 2005, and Jan. 31, 2006, the Flexible Income Fund (CS4) was ranked first by Lipper in the

Short Investment Grade Debt category (out of 179 and 181 funds respectively).

In updating trustees on GuideStone's medical plans, Jones noted, "Our most significant improvement area for 2005 was in our medical plans. While medical inflation is running at about 8-10 percent per year, over 40 percent of our personal medical plan participants received a rate decrease in 2005 and over 57 percent received a rate decrease in January of this year. In addition to the rate decreases, participants also received increased benefits such as copays for office visits at medical specialists and enhanced wellness benefits. The combination of adding over 1,200 new participants to our plans, using a single provider network through Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield and pharmacy discounts through Medco has significantly helped to stabilize our medical plan rates."

Billinger reported that GuideStone's total assets were \$8.9 billion as of Dec. 31, 2005, compared to \$8.1 billion at Dec. 31, 2004. GuideStone reached an additional milestone with total assets crossing the \$9 billion mark as of the end of January 2006.

Reporting on the results of the annual external audit, Billinger told trustees, "The independent auditor,

PricewaterhouseCoopers, provided a clean audit opinion with no detection of fraud or concern for such and no concern with internal controls."

In the financial assistance area, Jones reported a banner year for gifts to the Adopt An Annuitant program. With gifts of \$1.4 million from the Cooperative Program and a special trust of \$1.9 million from the Louisiana Baptist Convention, cash and deferred gifts to the program totaled more than \$7.7 million.

The entire Cooperative Program allocation for GuideStone is spent in its relief ministry without any expense applied. Gifts from individuals and churches to the Adopt An Annuitant program supplement the convention allocation. Information concerning the Adopt An Annuitant program may be requested by calling GuideStone's toll-free telephone number, 1-888-98-GUIDE (1-888-984-8433) or by e-mailing the financial assistance department at [adopt@GuideStone.org](mailto:adopt@GuideStone.org).

At the Monday evening dinner meeting, three trustees were honored for their years of service to GuideStone: K. Milton Higgins of California, John J. Mulligan of New York, and Bobby G. Sorrells of Alabama.

The next scheduled meeting of GuideStone trustees is July 31-Aug. 1.



# THE VILLAGE VIEW



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## FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

### Celebrate People Coming to Christ

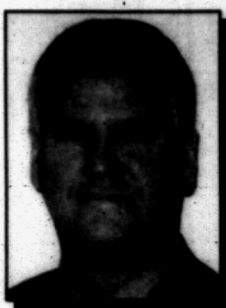
Luke 15: 1-7, 11-13, 22-24, 28-32

By Huey Dedmon

Most Christians profess to have a clear understanding of the instructions Jesus gave us in the "Great Commission." He instructed us to make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to observe the things He taught. (Matt. 28:19-20) Though many understand the instructions it saddens me that only a few actually try to follow them. It seems that the majority of church members are satisfied with sitting and soaking every Sunday while the world around them dies and goes to Hell. Others consider themselves to be so self-righteous that they will not associate with "sinners." The modern day church has equated lost people with something that is dirty and needs to be avoided.

But there is hope. In every church there is a small, but active, band of people who take the instructions Jesus gave as a heart call in their lives. These are the people in our churches who openly seek out the lost and help make them feel welcome and wanted. What is the attitude all Christians should have toward people who come to Christ and into the church? Our passage today in Luke 15 gives us the answer.

Jesus was going about His normal routine and found Himself, as many times He did, surrounded by "tax collectors and sinners." (Luke 15:1) The Pharisees and teachers of the law began to complain about Jesus' association with these people they considered "unclean." Jesus responds to



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their complaints with three parables.

In the parable of the "Lost Sheep" (Luke 15: 1-7), Jesus tells of a shepherd who had one hundred sheep under his care. One of them gets lost. The shepherd leaves the ninety nine and goes looking for the lost one. When he finds his lost lamb, he

calls his friends together to celebrate. Likewise the parable of the "Lost Coin" (Luke 15:8-10) depicts a woman who loses a valuable coin and searches diligently until she finds it. The parallel obviously portrays how we should feel about a lost person coming to know Christ. The truth is the thing that makes Jesus the happiest is not us sitting in church every Sunday, but us sitting in church beside a person we have brought with us. Jesus clearly teaches us that we should diligently seek the lost and rejoice over them when they come to know Him. The compassion of Jesus for lost people is His heart cry to us. We

must not only have compassion for the lost, but also go out and witness, then "compel them to come in". Finally, we must make a conscious effort to make them feel welcome.

It would seem that Jesus' teaching would have been understood by the Pharisees and teachers of the law, but that was not the case. He used the parable of the "Lost Son" (Luke 15: 11-31) to make sure there was no misunderstanding about His reason for being among the lost sheep of Israel. In Luke 15: 11-24, Jesus tells of a man who had two sons. The younger son asked for his inheritance early from his father. After receiving his money, he left home and wasted everything he had living the "good life." When all his money was gone he found himself taking care of pigs. He thought of his father's house and how even the servants were living better than he was, so he returned home. When his father saw him coming he ran to meet him and called for a great celebration. It did not matter to the father that he returned empty

handed, it only mattered that he returned. The most important thing to God is not how we look, what we own, or even how much money we give to the church. It is all as "clanging cymbals and noisy gongs" to God. True followers of Christ celebrate when a lost person comes home to the Father.

Luke 15: 28-32 points us to the greatest challenge we face in the church today. The older brother refused to join the celebration. He was angry because of all the fuss being made over his wayward brother. He had remained at home and worked for his father. His father had never given him a party! How much this sounds like us. "Well, I'm here every Sunday and nobody ever makes a fuss over me!" We are safe in the sheep pen, but there are many outside the pen in grave danger. You and I must drop our self-absorbed, self-righteous attitude. Many are going to die without Christ because of it.

*Dedmon is minister of education at First Church, Grenada.*

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Do You Take God at His Word?

Isaiah 7:1-14, 16

By Lori Clendinning

A lot of bumper stickers come and go, but this one lingers from my youth: "God said it, I believe it, that settles it." How much better our lives would be if we would take God's Word to heart, believing Him fully. This week's lesson in Isaiah 7 illustrates what happened when Judah's King Ahaz refused to trust God. Speaking through His prophet Isaiah, God wanted Ahaz to take Him at His Word, that He was their best protection during a national crisis.

Ahaz was a descendant of King Saul, born of the tribe of Benjamin. He succeeded his father Jotham to the throne at the age of twenty, and ruled the kingdom of Judah from 736-16 BC. Ahaz's grandfather, King Uzziah, had led the country to its pinnacle, bringing about mili-

tary, economic, and political strength. Sadly, Ahaz's reign brought about Judah's rapid decline and loss of territory to other nations. Much of Judah's loss was the result of Ahaz's indulgence in pagan cults. During his reign, child sacrifice was reinstated, and Ahaz even burned his own son as an offering.

Judah had also refused an offer to join forces with two allies, Israel's King Pekah, and Rezin, king of Aram-Damascus, otherwise known as Syria. The two kings wanted to strengthen the three countries in case of an Assyrian attack, but they were rejected. This snub led to an invasion by the two allied nations against Judah, and though they failed to overtake Jerusalem, Ahaz's army was dealt a significant blow. Judah lost much of her riches to the



Clendinning

plundering nations and many of her citizenry to captors.

Sadly, the attack by Israel and Aram-Damascus was something Judah could have overcome, had Ahaz listened to and obeyed God. God plainly said that Ahaz should not lose heart over the two nations and their joint attack, that if the young king trusted God, "It will not take place, it will not happen... If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all." (Isaiah 7:7, 9)

But Ahaz refused to believe that God would keep His Word, instead choosing man's reasoning over faith. The kings of Israel and Aram-Damascus attacked Judah, who became weaker than she'd ever been. Struggling to regain his crippled nation, Ahaz foolishly chose to appeal to the Assyrian king for help. King Tiglath-pileser III, nicknamed Pul or Pulu, was one of Assyria's greatest conquerors, having overtaken the eastern king-

doms of Babylon and Urtu before turning his armies loose on a westward sweep. During his eighteen year reign, he conquered Philistia, destroyed Damascus, and occupied most of Israel, eventually establishing Assyrian provinces in Gilead, the Galilee and other Mediterranean areas.

Ahaz had fair warning about King Pulu's westward invasion, yet the inexperienced king still refused to heed the strong counsel delivered by Isaiah: "Is it not enough to try the patience of men? Will you try the patience of my God also?... The Lord will bring on you and on your people and on the house of your father a time unlike any since Ephraim broke away from Judah — he will bring the king of Assyria." (Isaiah 7:13, 17)

Still, Ahaz sent an invitation to King Pulu to aid Judah in her recovery from the attack by King Pekah and King Rezin. Not only did Ahaz send gifts to Pulu, he also replicated the king's pagan altar and placed it in the temple where his forefather King Solomon

had positioned the bronze altar as an offering to God. The terror with which King Pulu held sway caused great fear among the people of Judah. Many of them were taken captivity and sent in exile to other Assyrian territories. Their nation was crumbling and it was a time of great crisis and catastrophe, all as a result of Ahaz's refusal to trust God.

Likewise, we are fearful when our security is threatened. Catastrophes of personal and national size endanger us and we, like Ahaz, must choose to either accept or reject God's Word. Although our territory may not be that of a kingdom, we must recognize that our decisions impact the generations that will follow after us. Will we be faithful to believe and obey God's commands, to live life according to His Word? Will we stand firm in our faith? Truly, we can depend on God to do what He says He will do.

After all, He said it, and that settles it.

*Clendinning is a member of First Church, Brandon.*

## Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing,

and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST  
**Record**



# New Cooperative Program outlook taking shape

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The Difference is easy to see. It's a DVD being mailed to Southern Baptist churches across the country.

"The love of Southern Baptists is making a difference through the Cooperative Program," the cover of the DVD states. The Difference DVD focuses on how Southern Baptists have been at the leading edge of helping victims of Hurricane Katrina — as well as victims of the tsunami in Asia, the earthquake in Pakistan and other natural disasters.

"Pastors are supported," when Southern Baptists give through the Cooperative Program, the DVD cover notes. "Congregations are being restored. Lives are being changed forever."

The Cooperative Program, however, reaches far beyond disaster relief: State by state, nationally and internationally, CP gifts from Southern Baptist churches help impart the Gospel to people in need of Christ within state lines and across North America and the world.

The Difference DVD, distributed by the Cooperative Program office of the SBC Executive Committee, includes four video segments of varying lengths that can be used in sermons or other parts of a church service, Sunday School and any other setting to explain the crucial role the Cooperative Program plays in the overall scope of Southern Baptist outreach, from disaster relief to evangelization of people worldwide in cities and across the countryside who do not know the name of Jesus.

David E. Hankins, executive director of the Katrina-impacted Louisiana Baptist Convention, states via the DVD: "The wonderful thing about our Southern Baptist network and our Cooperative Program mission funding process is that not only were our partners able to come to our aid in this disaster, but not one other ministry failed that was going on before the hurricane, except those right in the hurricane area."

"We didn't have to bring home not one international missionary because of the worst natural disaster to ever hit on U.S. soil. Why? Because the Cooperative Program had that taken care of."

"Could you imagine," Hankins continues, "if all these affected areas had been supporting their missionaries just directly out of their congregation, and their congregation [was] destroyed? Not only would it stop that ministry here, but those missionaries would have been left without a lifeline out there in the far-away places in the world...."

"Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program has taken care of all these ministries — 24/7, 365, we're still up and running while we take on this additional task of rebuilding our churches here in the path of Katrina," Hankins notes.

## Additional Resources

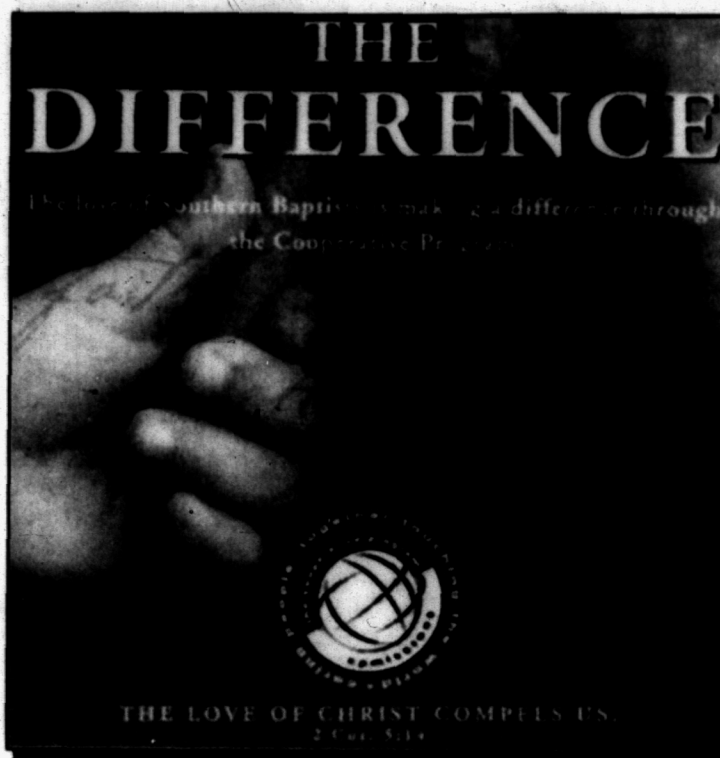
A second Cooperative Program resource also is being mailed to the SBC's 43,000-plus churches: When Saints Go Marching In, by Hankins, who formerly was the Executive Committee's vice president for Cooperative Program, and Norm Miller, a freelance writer and ordained minister in Richmond, Va.

The small book likewise recounts "how and why Southern Baptists" — the nation's third-largest disaster relief group — "made such a difference" in Katrina's aftermath, the book's cover states.

The DVD and book are the first in a line of quarterly CP Missions resources to be released by the Cooperative Program office of the Executive Committee.

Also being distributed in conjunction with Cooperative Program day, April 9, in the Southern Baptist Convention: a four-part series for state Baptist papers adapted from a 2005 book on the Cooperative Program, One Sacred Effort, by Hankins and Chad Brand, associate professor of Christian theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

The series addresses the Great Need at the heart of the Cooperative Program — people amid "the world's pain ... [who are] ready for the Gospel"; the "Great Strategy" — one that is thoughtful, prayerful, comprehensive and cooperative, as opposed to competitive, for advancing the Gospel; the Great Results with "thousands of missionaries, thousands of seminary students and hundreds of workers in children's homes and other helping ministries" supported through the Cooperative Program; and a "Great Obligation" — responding to Jesus' call: "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth workers into the harvest" (Matthew 9:38).



## 'More convinced than ever'

Morris H. Chapman, president of the Executive Committee, noted, "Now more than ever, I am convinced that the Cooperative Program is the most efficient and effective funding method for accomplishing the Acts 1:8 mandate to be Christ's witnesses — beginning where we are and ultimately reaching to the ends of the earth. Consequently, I am greatly encouraged by the incredible amount of fresh energy and synergy focused on the Cooperative Program. Bob Rogers, VP for CP, and his team are producing some exciting new resources to heighten awareness among Southern Baptists of the tremendous return on Kingdom investment achieved through the Cooperative Program. Their efforts together with the recent adoption of the Ad Hoc Cooperative Program Committee's recommendations by the state executives and the Executive Committee are already getting traction and building momentum."

"Just imagine," Chapman said, "what we can accomplish with greater CP support: more missionaries sent with the Gospel to unreached people groups, more church planters to establish more new churches that will reach more people, more seminary trained ministers to equip churches to reach the lost and disciple the saved, more ministry that shows the love of Jesus in practical ways, and more godly influence on the moral and cultural challenges we face as a nation."

"Again, it is my fervent prayer that these concerted efforts will inspire a renewed sense of passion among Southern Baptists to give systematically and sacrificially through the Cooperative Program so that together we might do more than ever to reach people of every tribe and tongue, every people and nation with the glorious Gospel," Chapman said.

## New CP vision

The Ad Hoc Cooperative Program Committee referenced by Chapman reflects an unprecedented stirring among Baptist leaders across the country to fortify Southern Baptists' giving through the Cooperative Program.

The committee, encompassing eight state Baptist executive directors, Chapman and Rogers, set forth a number of recommendations and strategies, which received unanimous approval from the state Baptist executive-directors during their mid-February annual meeting in Canada.

The measures call for:

- "every segment of SBC life ... to reaffirm our commitment to biblical stewardship and to our cooperation in the Great Commission/Acts 1:8 mission," reflecting evangelism that stretches from a church's community to people who have yet to hear the Gospel throughout the world.

- "each believer to tithe of his financial resources to his local church and ... all Southern Baptist churches to adopt a missional mindset as they contribute at least 10 percent of their undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program to local and global missions." High priority should be given to "the development of quality stewardship training materials with an emphasis on tithing."

- "the election of state and national convention officers whose churches give at least 10 percent of their undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program."

- "each state convention [to] have a plan for forwarding an increasing percentage of receipts to SBC mission causes through the Cooperative Program, with the Cooperative Program Advance Plan being one possible model" as a way to give more through CP.

- "the 2006 SBC and state convention annual meetings be used to launch an SBC-wide celebration of and emphasis on the Cooperative Program."

- the mobilizing of high-profile pastors as "CP Champions" and recruiting churches to pilot a year-long stewardship/Cooperative Program emphasis to build awareness of the impact a church can have via CP Missions in fulfilling the Great Commission.

- state and national publications "to actively include CP stories and information as regular features in every issue.... The CP connections must be clearly stated in each article; we cannot assume our people know all that is accomplished through their participation in the CP."

- mission trips to be linked with the Cooperative Program to "help churches understand that volunteer missions should be built on the foundation of their giving through the CP, not in place of it."

The recommendations are "a historic step forward as Southern Baptists in the work of the Cooperative Program," Anthony Jordan, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, said during the Executive Committee's Feb. 20-21 meeting in Nashville, Tenn.

Chapman agreed, noting, "... [I]f we follow all the way through with it, it will be a historic breakthrough for the Kingdom [and] for Southern Baptists." The Ad Hoc Cooperative Program Committee report joins two other recently released CP reports that together indicate a growing momentum to revitalize the Cooperative Program as the primary giving channel to promote worldwide missions, ministries and theological education:

- the SBC Funding Study Committee, an 11-member group created by the Executive Committee in 2002, which issued one of its ongoing reports to the Executive Committee Feb. 20 with various recommendations by which SBC entities could give greater visibility and promotion to the Cooperative Program.

- the Task Force on Cooperation, an eight-member group of four state executives and four SBC entity heads created jointly by the state execs and the SBC Great Commission Council of SBC entity heads in 2000, which issued a report last September, with a number of recommendations paralleling the Ad Hoc Cooperative Program Committee's report.

## Pastors' viewpoint

Such recommendations likely will prompt a hearty amen from pastors across the country convinced that their churches' gifts through the Cooperative Program make a difference worldwide.

"Every church has its own identity," pastor Tim Marrow of First Church of West Albuquerque, said in a CP feature carried by Baptist Press, "but [the Cooperative Program] is something every Southern Baptist church can be a part of, so that every person has an opportunity to hear the Gospel before Jesus returns."

Pastor David Pope of Western Avenue Church in Connorsville, Ind., "Where else can a church's financial investment reap such eternal rewards...? Through the Cooperative Program we get to have a hand in all six SBC seminaries, affect policy in our nation's capital, and have a hand in missionary efforts all around the world. It's a unique team process. There's nothing like it and I believe it is just one reason Southern Baptists remain so effective."

Pastor Calvin Wittman of Applewood Church in Wheat Ridge, Colo., said, "A pastor has to ask, 'What could we do in impacting the lostness in our world if every person would get involved in the Cooperative Program? How many more people could be reached? What could we do if every church cooperated the way they want their members to cooperate?'"

"If we're not as a church giving at least 10% to the Cooperative Program, how can we ask our members to tithe?" Wittman said. "I know there are other ways of doing missions, but there is no better way than the Cooperative Program. [It] is the most effective way to reach the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That's why we're involved with it. We're a missions-minded church."